

RURAL DISTRICT OF TAMWORTH

ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

Health of the District

For the Year 1948

— BY —

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I, SPRINGFIELD,

COLESHILL.

30th June 1949.

To the Tamworth Rural District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting my report on the health of the District for 1948. It incorporates the report of the Sanitary Inspector.

The most notable event of the year was the coming into operation of the National Health Service Act (1946). This resulted in many important changes, one of which was the introduction of a scheme of Area Medical Administration by the County Council and the combination of Area Medical Officer and District Medical Officer of Health in one appointment.

Under this arrangement the District Medical Officer of Health is responsible for the day-to-day administration of various services such as school health, maternal and child welfare and domiciliary nursing.

This allows close contact with the many health problems which arise from time to time and largely eliminates the overlapping as between County and District which was unavoidable under the old system.

Although only in its early stages area health administration promises to provide a more personal and efficient service and I am confident it will prove of great benefit to the population of the district.

N. C. MACLEOD,

Medical Officer of Health.

TAMWORTH RURAL DISTRICT.

A. EXTRACT FROM VITAL STATISTICS FOR THE YEAR.

Population (estimated) Mid-year, 1948	...	...	...	15,770
Birth Rate	...	...	...	19.6
Still Births—Rate per 1,000 total births	...	...	...	26.5
Death Rate	...	...	...	9.9
Deaths from Diseases and Accidents of Pregnancy and Child-birth	{	From Sepsis	...	nil
		From other causes	...	1
Death Rate of Infants under 1 year of age :-				
All Infants per 1,000 live births	...	...	...	20
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 legitimate live births	...	...	...	17
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 illegitimate live births	...	...	...	91
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	...	...	...	Nil
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	...	...	...	Nil

Population. The estimated population of 15,770 is 40 less than that for 1947.

Birth Rate. 19.6 per 1,000 is 1.6 per 1,000 lower than in 1947 but is still higher than the figure for England and Wales.

Death Rate. 9.9 per 1,000 compares with 10.2 per 1,000 for the district in 1947 and with 10.8 per 1,000 for England and Wales in 1948.

Infantile Mortality. The rate of 20 per 1,000 live births is lower than in 1947 and is substantially less than the 1948 figure, for England and Wales, 34 per 1,000.

The figure of 91 for the death rate of illegitimate infants under 1 year of age may appear unduly high but, in plain language, it represents the death of one out of a total of 11 illegitimate live births.

B. GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE DISTRICT.

Public Health Officers.

Following the introduction of Area Medical Administration, referred to in my introduction, Dr. William Lowson, who had been Medical Officer of Health of this district for 17 years, retired from the service of the Council.

I took up my appointment on 1st September, 1948, as Area Medical Officer and Medical Officer of Health for the North Western Area of the County, which consists of the Rural Districts of Tamworth and Meriden.

The Sanitary Inspector, Mr. C. W. Beresford, developed a grave illness at the end of the year under review and his death early in 1949 is recorded with regret. His high personal character combined with his technical ability made Mr. Beresford a very popular officer and his death at an early age was sincerely regretted by his fellow officers and by the public whom he had served loyally for several years.

Laboratory Services.

The National Public Health Service Laboratory established at Coventry at the end of the year provides a free bacteriological service which should prove of great value in the diagnosis prevention and control of communicable diseases.

C. SANTARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

1. Water Supplies.

During the year supplies throughout the district were satisfactory with the exception of that in the Kingsbury Area where both quantity and quality were at times below modern standards. The Kingsbury supply was derived from the Kingsbury Colliery and the two Dumble Springs. Unsatisfactory bacteriological findings led to a full investigation and to the incrimination of the Larger Dumble spring as the source of contamination. Use of this spring was immediately discontinued and later sampling of the public supply proved bacteriologically satisfactory. However, in view of the chemical composition of the Kingsbury Colliery water with its excessive iron content and discolouration which gave rise to frequent complaints by the public, the Council decided to ask Birmingham Corporation for an early extension of their supply to the parish of Kingsbury.

Negotiations have proceeded satisfactorily and the proposals have received the approval of the Ministry of Health. A wholesome water supply at Kingsbury is overdue and it is hoped that its provision will not now be unduly delayed.

During the year 14 samples were taken for bacteriological examination and of these 6, all in the Kingsbury area, were unsatisfactory.

The following table gives the approximate water distribution within the district and shows that nearly 99% of the population have a piped supply.

<i>Parish.</i>	<i>Estimated Population Mains Available. Connected.</i>	<i>Not Connected.</i>	<i>Estimated Number of Houses Connected.</i>	<i>No Main Available Estimated Population.</i>
Amington ...	1,396	—	350	18
Austrey ...	344	15	88	25
Bolehall and Glascote ...	2,614	—	655	—
Kingsbury ...	4,118	—	1,025	40
Middleton ...	430	12	175	46
Newton Regis...	497	—	125	—
Seckington ...	65	8	30	—
Shuttington ...	632	—	160	4
Wilnecote and Castle Liberty	5,575	—	1,400	15
TOTALS	15,681	35	4,008	148

II. *Drainage and Sewerage.*

It is estimated that some 85% of the population are enjoying the convenience of main sewerage.

The disposal works at Cliff, Wood End, Hurley and Hurley Common are not satisfactory but the new Hurley Sewerage and Sewerage Disposal Scheme which has been prepared and approved will remedy the position. Work on this scheme is expected to commence shortly.

Schemes to cover Bassets Pole and Middleton have been submitted to the Ministry for approval.

The northern part of the district, embracing the parishes of Austrey, Newton Regis, Seckington and Shuttington, has also received consideration and a scheme to meet the requirements of this area is in course of preparation.

III. *Refuse Collection.*

The system of weekly collection in all parishes by direct labour under the control of the Council's Engineer and Surveyor continues to operate satisfactorily.

Disposal is by semi-controlled tipping.

IV. *Rodent Control.*

The full time Rodent Operator continues to give good service and all sewers and refuse tips are treated periodically.

D. HOUSING.

During the year 8 new houses were built by private enterprise and 160, including 70 aluminium bungalows for mine workers, by the Council.

The housing shortage is, however, still acute and many people have to live in unsatisfactory houses and in conditions of overcrowding which cannot but be detrimental to their health.

During the year 4 statutory notices were served under the Public Health Act in respect of minor housing defects.

E. INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

I. *Meat and other Foods.*

The slaughter and inspection of animals killed for food (other than bacon pigs killed by householders for their own use) is carried out at the Government Slaughterhouse which is situated within the Borough of Tamworth.

The whole of the slaughterhouses in the district are now licensed under the provisions of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938.

The number of licensed slaughtermen under the provisions of the Slaughter of Animals Act is 42.

The number of premises registered under Section 14 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1938 is 19 comprising :-

Five premises for storage and sale of Ice-cream.

Six premises for manufacture, storage and sale of Ice-cream.

Eight premises for the preparation and manufacture of sausages or potted, pressed, pickled or preserved food intended for sale, including the preparation of meat or fish by any process of cooking.

II. *Cowsheds and Dairies.*

The number of registered farms and dairies in the district is 153. Of these 39 hold Accredited licences and 9 T.T. licences.

During the year improvements were carried out to several farms though the continued shortage of materials and labour is still retarding progress.

III. *Food Poisoning.*

There were no cases during the year.

F. PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The following table shows the cases of the chief infectious diseases notified during 1948, together with their age incidence and deaths.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	NO. OF CASES NOTIFIED.								Total Cases Re- moved to Hospit ^l	TOTAL DEATHS.
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.								
		Under 1	1—5	5—15	15—25	25—45	45—65	65 and upwards		
Pneumonia	19	3	3	6	—	5	1	1	—	5
Scarlet Fever	19	—	3	13	3	—	—	—	17	—
Dysentery	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Typhoid Fever	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—
Erysipelas	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Acute Poliomyelitis	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—
Pulmonary Tuberculosis	9	—	—	—	5	3	1	—	—	6
Other forms of Tuberculosis	8	—	2	4	2	—	—	—	1	2
TOTALS	59	4	8	23	11	9	3	1	24	13

(1) Also notified were 294 cases of measles and 50 of Whooping Cough, compared to 77 cases of measles and 16 of Whooping Cough in 1947.

(2) *Acute Poliomyelitis*. One case was notified in a young girl of 17 who was employed as a children's nurse. She recovered and, fortunately, there were no further cases.

(3) *Scarlet Fever*. The figure of 19 compares with 7 during 1947.

(4) *Diphtheria*. The absence of any cases of diphtheria for the second year in succession is most satisfactory, but to maintain this position it is necessary that there be no relaxation in immunisation activities, full facilities for which are available throughout the district.

During the year 249 children under 5 years of age and 27 between the ages of 5 and 14 years, a total of 276, completed a full course of immunisation.

In addition, 45 children were given a reinforcing or "booster" injection.

The large majority of these immunisations were carried out at Infant Welfare Centres and in schools.

School Closures. Nil.

PREVALANCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, TUBERCULOSIS.

AGE-PERIODS.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	<i>Pulmonary.</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary.</i>		<i>Pulmonary.</i>		<i>Non-Pulmonary.</i>	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1	—	—	—	2	—	2	—	1
5	—	—	1	3	—	—	—	—
15	3	2	1	1	1	—	—	—
25	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
35	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
45	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
55	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
65	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Totals	6	3	2	6	4	2	1	1

The 9 pulmonary and 8 non-pulmonary cases notified shows a marked increase on the 1947 figures which were 3 and 2 respectively. Eight deaths were registered compared to 4 in the previous year.

Treatment.

Facilities for the isolation and treatment of cases of respiratory tuberculosis are most unsatisfactory, largely due to the lack of staff for existing hospital beds.

Long delay in securing admission to a sanatorium reduces the patients chances of ultimate recovery and also exposes his family to the risks of infection. This is a very real danger when isolation at home is impossible, as is generally the case with many people living in homes which are unsatisfactory and often overcrowded.

CANAL BOATS.

Periodical visits were made to the various docks and wharves for the purpose of examining canal boats.

During the year 2 new registrations were made giving a total of 146.

Two complaints were laid regarding weather-proofing boats. In both cases the defects were remedied.

No infectious disease was met with and therefore no boats detained for disinfection.

FACTORIES.

The numbers on the registers are :-

- (1) Factories in which sections 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 of the Factories Act are to be enforced by the Council.....34.
- (2) Factories not included in (1) in which section 7 is enforced by the Council31.

One defect found, namely, insufficient sanitary conveniences, was remedied as a result of informal action.

SUMMARY OF VISITS BY SANITARY INSPECTOR.

Housing Acts ...	...	...	...	220
Nuisances ...	...	...	...	84
Milk and Dairies ...	...	...	...	66
Drains and Sewers ...	...	...	...	92
Water Supplies ...	...	...	...	60
Factories ...	...	...	...	15
Moveable Dwellings ...	...	...	...	33
Petroleum Regulations	...	...	...	10
Canal Boats ...	...	...	...	34
Rodent Control ...	...	...	...	15
Food and Drugs Act	...	...	...	22
Food Inspection ...	...	...	...	6
Infectious Diseases ...	...	...	...	27
Slaughterhouses and Knackers Yards	...	...	...	8
Miscellaneous ...	...	...	...	35

TABLE I.
TAMWORTH RURAL DISTRICT.
CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1948.

<i>Causes of Death.</i>				<i>Males.</i>	<i>Females.</i>
All Causes.				86	70
1	Typhoid and Paratyphoid Fevers	...	...	—	—
2	Cerebro Spinal Fever	...	...	—	—
3	Scarlet Fever	...	...	—	—
4	Whooping Cough	...	...	—	—
5	Diphtheria	...	...	—	—
6	Tuberculosis of Respiratory System	...	...	4	2
7	Other Forms of Tuberculosis	...	...	1	1
8	Syphilitic Diseases	...	...	—	—
9	Influenza	...	...	2	1
10	Measles	...	...	—	—
11	Ac. Polio-Myel. and Polio-Enceph.	...	...	—	—
12	Ac. Infant Enceph.	...	...	1	—
13	Cancer of B. Cav. and Oesoph (M)	...	...	—	—
	Uterus (F)	...	...	1	1
14	Cancer of Stomach and Duod.	...	...	5	6
15	Cancer of Breast	...	...	—	3
16	Cancer, other Sites	...	...	9	7
17	Diabetes	...	...	—	1
18	Intra Cran. Vasc. Lesions	...	...	2	8
19	Heart Disease	...	...	22	18
20	Other Dis. Circ. System	...	...	4	1
21	Bronchitis	...	...	10	3
22	Pneumonia	...	...	3	2
23	Other Resp. Diseases	...	...	1	—
24	Ulcer of Stomach and Duod.	...	...	—	—
25	Diarrhoea (under 2 years)	...	...	—	—
26	Appendicitis	...	...	—	—
27	Other Digestive Diseases	...	...	1	—
28	Nephritis	...	...	—	—
29	Puer. and Post Abort Sepsis	...	...	—	—
30	Other Maternal Causes	...	...	—	1
31	Premature Birth	...	...	1	1
32	Con. Mal., Birth Inj., etc.	...	...	1	1
33	Suicide	...	...	6	1
34	Road Traffic Accidents	...	...	1	—
35	Other Violent Causes	...	...	3	4
36	All Other Causes	...	...	8	8

